

Central Region youth earn DCFS scholarships

Most students head to college with the basic trappings of books, clothes and a calculator. But these students whose cases are handled in Central Region had a send off that included paid tuition and academic fees at any of the participating Illinois universities and junior colleges, a monthly stipend of \$445 and a medical card for up to four years. The recipients of the 2005 DCFS Scholarship were selected from 218 worthy applicants. Based on their record of academic achievement, their community involvement, and personal successes, the young scholars featured below can now focus on their new path toward a college degree.

JONATHAN BLOUT

Jonathan, of Lewistown, is a 2005 graduate of Lewistown High School where he earned a 3.06 grade point average on a 4.0 system and ranked 17 in his class of 45. He was consistently on the honor roll and participated in baseball, band, the Chess Club and the Industrial Arts Club. Jonathan has volunteered at his church and at 4-H events. He works construction jobs in the summers and is a gifted craftsman. Jonathan attends John A. Logan Community College and majors in Construction-Workforce Education and Development. He plans to transfer to Southern Illinois University to complete his junior and senior years. His career goal is to be an industrial arts teacher.

basketball and the concert choir. She currently attends the University of Illinois, majoring in chemistry. Tyla has planned a career in forensic chemistry as part of the criminal justice system.

JESSICA COTTON

Jessica, of Springfield, is a 2005 graduate of Springfield High School where she earned a 3.3 grade point average on a 4.0 system and ranked 84 in her class of 328. Her academic honors include the National Honor Roll, Who's Who Among American High School Students, Bank One Student of the Week, and Cooperative Office Occupations Business Student of the Year. Jessica has volunteered for the St. John's Breadline, Ronald McDonald House, and Habitat for Humanity. She also worked for the State Employees Retirement System. Jessica is majoring in secondary education-math at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville.



TYLA CONERLY

Tyla, of Urbana, is a 2005 graduate of Urbana High School where she earned a 5.09 grade point average on a 5.0 system. Her academic honors received include the National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, and Who's Who Among American High School students. Tyla's volunteer experience includes projects with the Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church and the Salvation Army. During high school, Tyla participated in track,

Continued on Page 2



MEGAN COUPE

Megan, now residing in Brandon, Mississippi, is a 2004 graduate of Brandon High School where she attained a 4.0 grade point average on a 4.0 system. Her high school activities included soccer, cross-country, track, the Beta Club and the Key Club. She volunteered for a variety of service and community projects in Brandon. Megan also lived in Loja, Ecuador as a foreign exchange student specializing in agriculture. Her daily activities included planting crops, livestock maintenance, and field irrigation. Now that she is back in the United States, she attends the University of Southern Mississippi, with a double major in Spanish and journalism.



MICHAEL GAMBLE

Michael, of Nokomis, is a 2005 graduate of Nokomis High School where he earned a 3.9 grade point average on a 5.0 system. In high school, Michael was involved in football, chorus, soccer, the Art Club, the Letterman's Club, and the Illinois Chapter of Rembrandt Society. In addition, he has earned state and regional awards in art. Michael has been actively involved with the Hopewell Baptist youth group and enjoys lifting weights and playing the guitar. He has worked as a landscaper, a farm laborer, and at LaSalle Wholesale Florist. Michael now attends Lincoln Land Community College with a major in music education.

LEONARD EASLEY

Leonard, of Beardstown, is a 2004 graduate of Dwight Township High School where he earned a 3.84 grade point average on a 4.0 system and ranked 14 in his class of 69. He also earned Board Scholar honors. Leonard accomplished these academic achievements despite attending four different high schools in four years. His school activities included band, chorus, drama, baseball, and Future Farmers of America. Leonard volunteered at his church's Vacation Bible School. He has worked for both McDonald's and Ralston Brothers Construction. Leonard attends the University of Illinois at Springfield, majoring in criminal justice.



PAUL JONES

Paul, of Champaign, is a 2005 graduate of Champaign Centennial High School where he earned a 4.09 grade point average on a 5.0 system. Academic awards include Who's Who Among American High School Students and the National Society of High School Scholars. He participated in football and basketball, and he devoted time to volunteering for the Cub Scout summer camp, a local nursing home, Upward Bound, and Boy Scouts of America. Paul is now a student at Western Illinois University, majoring in biology with a minor in forensic science. Paul's career goal is to be a scientist in the criminal justice system.



GABRIEL EMERICK

Gabriel, of Vandalia, is a 2005 graduate of Vandalia Community High School where he earned a 3.6 grade point average on a 5.0 system. His high school activities included soccer, the Student Council, wrestling, football, tennis, and theatre. He also served as a two-year class officer. Gabriel was a member of the wrestling team that won 3rd place in the state tournament, and he received the IHSA Support a Winning Attitude award. Gabriel worked at Ponderosa Steak House and also served as a volunteer peer tutor. Now he attends Illinois State University, pursuing a major in psychology.



JENNIFER NANCE

Jennifer, of Charleston, was a January, 2005 graduate of Charleston High School where she ranked 6 in her class of 200 and was a member of the speech and drama team, band, and Spanish club. She scored a 33 on her ACT test and earned membership to the National Honor Society, Spanish National Honor Society, and Illinois State Scholar honors. Jennifer is an accomplished musician and was selected to participate in the Symphonic Honors Initiative Program at Eastern Illinois University, which involved playing trumpet in the EIU

symphony orchestra. Her work experience includes McDonald's and volunteer work at Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospital. Jennifer now studies at the University of Illinois-Champaign, majoring in music education.



JUSTIN SNYDER

Justin, of Gibson City, is a 2005 graduate of Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley High School where he earned a 3.47 grade point average on a 4.0 system and ranked 14 in his class of 75. He received the Math Student of the Year Award and Who's Who Among American High School Students award. In high school, Justin was involved with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, track, scholastic bowl, football, soccer, and theatre. He served as a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity and was President of the Community Youth Center. Justin has worked for McDonald's, and Kalos Construction. Now he attends Southern Illinois University, majoring in architecture.



AARON ZUERCHER

Aaron, of Port Byron, is a 2005 graduate of Riverdale High School where he ranked 24 in his class of 105 and earned a 3.85 grade point average on a 4.0 system. His school activities included cross-country, track, choir, and academic bowl. In addition, he was a member of the student council, and the student representative to the Riverdale School District technology committee. Aaron's extensive community involvement included home construction activities for family mission projects. Additional involvement included coaching youth soccer, and participating in craft activities with youth at the River Valley Library. Aaron plans to major in computer engineering, as he continues his studies the University of Illinois-Chicago.

Foster parents honored at their day in court

Tom and Jessica Huber had a happy occasion to go to the Adams County courthouse this summer. At a July ceremony, they received the SAM award, given by the Adams County Judiciary to foster parents who have gone above and beyond the call in working with children with special needs. The SAM award is given in the name of Samantha Otte, who died a few years ago from leukemia and complications in surgery. She was the daughter of Chuck and June Otte. Chuck is the Chief Probation Officer and June is a court reporter in Adams County. They established a foundation in Sam's name in the community that raises thousands of dollars via a golf tournament and auction for children's programs and agencies in the community.

Summer of appreciation for foster parents by DCFS staff

The Rock Island Field Office proved that there was no better way to cool off on a hot summer day than with ice cream. The Foster Parent Appreciation Ice Cream Social gave staff an opportunity to thank the caregivers for their efforts as they met and mingled. The custom ice cream treats and special cakes helped everyone "break the ice."

The Cambridge office also turned to the power of ice cream, even after tornadoes moved their plans inside. Fortunately wind and rain couldn't keep the staff from dishing up their appreciation for the foster parents who braved the weather.

The Canton/Macomb DCFS offices hosted a Foster Parent Appreciation Picnic at the VFW Park in Bushnell. Ten foster parents, twenty-two foster/adopted children, and nine staff attended the festivities. A potluck lunch was served with staff providing meat and drinks. An appreciation recognition followed lunch with gifts given and prizes raffled.

Central Region Training Calendar

FosterPRIDE In-Service Training

All licensed foster parents and adoptive parents are welcome to attend any or all of the PRIDE In-Service Trainings to enhance their skills and meet yearly training requirements.

Module 1 - *The Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children* (Four 3-hour sessions = 12 training hours)

Module 2 - *Using Discipline to Protect and Nurture* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 3 - *Child Development* - New module being written

Module 4 - *Child Sexual Development and Sexual Abuse* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 5 - *Supporting Relationships Between Children and Their Families* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 6 - *Working as a Professional Team Member* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 7 - *Promoting Children's Personal & Cultural Identity* (Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours)

Module 8 - *Promoting Permanency Outcomes* (Three 3-hour sessions = 9 training hours)

Module 9 - *Managing the Fostering Experience* (Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours)

Module 10 - *Understanding the Effects of Chemical Dependency on Children & Families* (Five 3-hour sessions = 15 training hours)

Peoria Area 888-507-7433

Module

PEORIA - Lutheran Social Services

Sept. 8 & 15 (Thu) 6-9 p.m. 9

Champaign Area 217/355-4644

Module

CHAMPAIGN - IETC

Sept. 17 (Sat) & 9 a.m.-4 p.m. 2
24 (Sat) 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Springfield Area 217/786-2458

Module

QUINCY - Blessing Hospital

Nov. 1, 8 & 15 (Tue) 6:30-9:30 p.m. 2

SPRINGFIELD - Lincoln Land Coll.

Nov. 3, 10 & 17 (Thur) 6:30-9:30 p.m. 4
Oct 22 & 29 (Sat) and 9 a.m.-4 p.m. 10
Nov. 5 (Sat) 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Educational Advocacy

Two 3-hour sessions = 6 training hours

It is mandatory for one foster parent in each family to attend Educational Advocacy Training in order to be re-licensed. Educational Advocacy Training is offered following each Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE training and many additional times. This six-hour course covers information foster parents need to know so that they can advocate for their foster children's educational rights and needs.

Peoria Area 888-507-7433

CANTON *Spoon River College*
Nov. 29 & Dec. 6 (Tue) 6-9 p.m.

EAST MOLINE *BHC Outreach Ctr.*
Nov. 12 & 19 (Sat) 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

GALESBURG *Lutheran Social Svcs.*
Dec. 6 & 13 6-9 p.m.

LASALLE *Catholic Charities*
Oct. 8 & 15 (Sat) 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

PEORIA *Children's Home*
Sept. 27 & Oct. 4 (Tue) 6-9 p.m.
Nov. 5 & 12 (Sat) 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

PEORIA *Lutheran Social Svcs.*
Nov. 28 & Dec. 5 (Mon) 6-9 p.m.

Champaign Area 217/355-4644

NORMAL - BabyFold
Oct. 6 & 13 (Thu) 6:30-9:30 p.m.

CHARLESTON - Coles Cty. Center for Human Services
Oct. 17 & 24 (Mon) 6:30-9:30 p.m.

DANVILLE - Location TBA
Dec. 6 & 13 (Tue) 6:30-9:30 p.m.

DECATUR - Webster-Cantrell Hall
Oct. 18 & 25 (Tue) 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Springfield Area 217/786-2458

SPRINGFIELD *Lincoln Land*
Oct. 1 (Sat) 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Dec. 5 & 12 (Mon) 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Central Connections

Sponsor

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Anyone can call the regional reporter with foster parent association news and schedules; local training notices; features on foster families and community members working for children; photos; and ideas for news articles or supportive services that would be helpful for caregivers to know.

**Pre-Registration is
required for all classes.
Call the number listed for
your area.**